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## Safety Sidekick Newsletter

Vol. 1, Sept. 24, 2015

On behalf of all of the team members for the **National Center for Rural Road Safety (Safety Center)**, it is my pleasure to welcome you to our inaugural issue of the **Safety Sidekick newsletter!**

We are very excited by your interest in the Safety Center, and we hope this newsletter will answer your questions about who we are and how we can connect you with useful transportation safety resources.

The Safety Center's vision is to empower rural road owners with customized and innovative road safety practices to save lives. With funding and support from FHWA, our mission is to provide coordinated, multidisciplinary, scalable, and accessible safety resources to accelerate the implementation of road safety improvements. In other words, we want to create one, easy-to-use place where you know you can always find useful information and guidance that will help everyone at your agency improve safety, mobility and incident response on the roads in your area.

Each issue of the newsletter will highlight topical or timely information, introduce you to people and organizations who are serving as resources, and inform you of upcoming trainings and events. For example, in this inaugural issue, don't miss the articles about:

- The National Center for Rural Road Safety's [collaborative team](#), which brings a dynamic combination of research and educational outreach to our organization
- "[Mapping the Future of America's Transportation](#)", a critical safety issue, especially for agencies that combine data analysis and engineering efforts to implement proven safety counter measures.
- [Road Safety Trainings](#), which includes upcoming trainings on high demand topics that are scheduled for this fall.

The newsletter will also keep you up-to-date as new resources are added to our **website**, which is the most comprehensive source of useful guidance and information. If

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you haven't checked it out yet, please go to the [Safety Center](#) website and see what's available. There is also an introductory video on our [Multimedia](#) page .

Once you've read the newsletter and looked over the website, please let us know what you think. What do you want to see more of? What issues are most important to your agency or region? If you have ideas for resources we should add to our website or noteworthy practices we should highlight, please contact us at [info@ruralsafetycenter.org](mailto:info@ruralsafetycenter.org). You can also use the same email address to make a request for more information or technical assistance.

Thanks for letting us be your trusted "safety sidekick" to make rural road travel safer!

Sincerely,



Steve Albert  
Director  
National Center for Rural Road Safety  
[info@ruralsafetycenter.org](mailto:info@ruralsafetycenter.org)

### Meet the Team

The National Center for Rural Road Safety would like to introduce you to our collaborative team members from across the country that are working together on this critical safety initiative. Each one of our member organizations brings its own special strengths and unique experiences to provide our center with the ability to tackle challenges through a wide ranging skill set. Through the use of partnerships, the Safety Center will provide coordinated, multidisciplinary support to promote safety improvements through engineering, enforcement, education, and emergency medical services.

We look forward to working with our local, state, and tribal road owners and their stakeholders to expand the reach of our program to every corner of the country with rural road challenges. Our website has recently been launched- we invite you to learn more about the Safety Center's organization- visit us at our [strategy page](#), [organization page](#), and our [let us help you page](#) to learn more about our advisory panels and the services we provide.

Our team members represent the following organizations:

The *Western Transportation Institute (WTI)* is the nation's largest National University Transportation Center focused on rural transportation research, planning, and engineering. Founded in 1994,



WTI brings together 70 professional researchers, staff, and affiliated faculty with an annual research budget of approximately \$10 million. WTI has coordinated research efforts in 40 states and has participated in international collaborations in over a dozen countries. WTI's research encompasses diverse areas including advanced transportation technologies, road ecology, winter maintenance, rural transit, and sustainable infrastructure. Over the years, WTI has worked with federal agencies, state departments of transportation and private partners to conduct nationally prominent research on wildlife crossings and other strategies to reduce animal vehicle collisions, the effective deployment of the Intelligent Transportation Systems and other technologies on rural roads, cost-effective strategies for expanding public transportation systems in rural areas, and safe and effective ways to clear snow and ice on winter roads.

Founded in 1983, *InTrans* at Iowa State University is an umbrella organization for seven

discrete university centers and five long-term funded programs, InTrans offers the capacity to address a range of rural transportation issues. Its mission has been to focus applied research on a wide variety of disciplines that affect transportations, and sponsor educational activities and outreach efforts which promote relations between the academic community and transportation practitioners. InTrans has worked with over 40 states to address safety issues, houses the Iowa Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP), and has been awarded numerous University Transportation Centers. With annual research expenditures of \$16 million, InTrans ranks seventh among the top university-based transportation research organizations in the U.S. in terms of annual expenditures.

## IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY Institute for Transportation

*The Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Transportation (CAIT), Rutgers University:* CAIT is one of only five National University Transportation Centers (UTCs), which serve as a primary resource for internationally recognized transportation research, technology transfer, and training. CAIT has an annual operating budget of more than \$25 million and a multidisciplinary staff of over 50 professionals. CAIT is home to the New Jersey LTAP and trains several thousand local and state agency personnel each year in nationally recognized safety programs from basic work zone safety to crash analysis.

## RUTGERS

Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Transportation

*Cambridge Systematics, Inc. (CS) :* The CS safety team has decades of experience working with federal, state, local, and Tribal agencies on strategic safety planning, safety target setting practices, program and project implementation, data collection and analysis methodologies, countermeasure selection and prioritization, monitoring, evaluation, training, and marketing and communications. CS has worked in 20 states to develop, implement, and evaluate Strategic Highway Safety Plans and conducted several projects to operationalize the federal safety-planning requirement.



*IDT Group (IDT):* IDT, a full-service training firm, offers industry-standard, state-of-the-practice instructional techniques to the design, development, and delivery of transportation training worldwide. IDT has provided more than 25 years of training and technical oversight to the National Highway Institute's(NHI) internationally-recognized training program, including NHI's safety and transportation operations courses.



*Bubar & Hall Consulting, LLC* is a Native American owned firm with extensive professional experience working with a wide range of stakeholders to support tribal self-determination and engagement, primarily in surface transportation, strategic planning, cultural resource management, economic development, child maltreatment and domestic violence prevention. Their services include community based qualitative and quantitative research, proposal writing, project management and strategic planning. Their focus is on supporting tribal capacity building through effective collaboration, cooperation, and communication between tribal stakeholders and federal, state, and local agencies and private sector interests. They have served as facilitators, trainers and consultants for a number of statewide, regional and national initiatives involving a broad scope of stakeholders.



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## The Pressing Need for Seatbelt Programs in Rural Areas

Despite the fact that vehicle congestion is virtually non-existent in many rural areas, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's numbers show that fatality rates per million vehicle miles traveled in rural area are double those of urban crashes. There are many factors contributing to this, most notably the greater number of rural miles traveled and the increased time it takes EMS to reach accident sites in rural areas. To learn more about these programs, check out the [Safety Center Blog](#).

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### Upcoming Road Safety Trainings/Events

## Safety Center Trainings

The Safety Center training program is a multi-disciplinary, collaborative effort to accelerate knowledge transfer from training to implementation. The Safety Center has designed their work plan to include a variety of training methods (e.g., videos, webinars, in-person trainings, summits), topics, and audiences. To find out more, please check out our [Trainings](#) page.

Don't miss out on the **first** Safety Center training, **Introduction to the National Center for Rural Road Safety**, on November 3rd. The Safety Center will be hosting this **FREE**, 1.5 hour **online** training event for road agencies and other stakeholders who want to learn more about what the new Safety Center has to offer. For more details about this training please view [training post](#).

## Safety Center Conference Booth

Watch for the Safety Center at conferences in 2016!



## Safety Center Training Eblasts

Keep an eye out for the Safety Center's **biweekly training eblast** . These training eblasts will highlight transportation safety organization's conferences and trainings like the ATSSA 46th Annual Convention and Traffic Expo described below.

## **ATSSA's 46th Annual Convention and Traffic Expo**

[ATSSA's 46th Annual Convention and Traffic Expo](#) is the premier event for more than 3,000 roadway safety professionals and transportation officials from across the USA and around the globe. Celebrating its forty-sixth year, the convention brings together business leaders, government officials, manufacturers, corporate roadway department personnel and all manner of people involved in nearly every aspect of roadway safety. Features include:

- More than 3,000 roadway safety professionals
- More than 200 exhibiting companies
- More than 200,000 square feet of exhibit space, showcasing the latest products and services for the industry
- A wide variety of cutting edge traffic safety solutions and state-of-the-art roadway safety vehicles and heavy equipment ranging from striping trucks to truck mounted attenuators will be on display on the convention floor
- A high-quality line-up of education and information sessions to ensure you are operating safely and efficiently, introduce you to new safety innovations, earn CEU credits, and raise your level of engagement in the industry

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### Education

## **Disconnect from Deadly Distractions**

Safety experts and advocates say they're struggling to convince Americans to stop distracted driving, even as a growing body of evidence shows that drivers who insist on texting or talking on cell phones while behind the wheel pose deadly threats on the nation's roads. Read more about this safety issue from the [National Transportation Safety Board](#).

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### Engineering

## **ITS Solutions for Safer Rural Road Intersections**

With these recommended ITS safety improvements, crashes can be prevented and possibly lives saved on your local roads. Check out this factsheet from the Minnesota Local Technical Assistance Program [here](#).

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### Road Users

## **Cost Effective Local Road Safety Planning and Implementation**

Locally owned roads comprise over 3 million miles, or 76 percent of the highway network in the United States. The fatality rate from crashes along these roads is disproportionately higher than it is on their urban counterparts. Consequently, there is a need to dramatically improve safety along these roadways by all available means. Learn more by reading the [American Traffic Safety Services Association](#) guide.

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### Safety Culture

## **10 Ways to Create a Safety Culture Among Fleet Drivers**



It's pretty clear drivers know how to drive safely. Training does not inform as much as it reinforces. Establishing a safety culture among fleet drivers will strengthen that reinforcement, and save money, too. Read more about these safety measures on [Automotive Fleet](#) magazine.

## **The Focused Approach to Safety Helps Us: "Practice What [We] Preach"**

We consistently champion a data-driven, evidence-based approach to safety investments. Using data and analytic methods to inform decision making is the most effective way of targeting resources to maximum effect. Read more of this message from [FHWA Associate Administrator for Safety](#), Tony Furst.

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### **Vehicle**

## **Mapping the Future of U.S. Transportation Infrastructure**

How data analysis and engineering solutions can go hand in hand in reducing crashes and savings lives. Read more about how shifting freight and travel patterns will affect roadway planning on [Fleet Owner](#).

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### **What's Hot Off the Press?**

## **FHWA Safety Manual For Local Road Owners**

This [FHWA](#) guide will provide techniques to local practitioners to help improve the safety of local rural roads.

## **Tribal Transportation Safety - TribalSafety.org**

This newly released [Tribal Transportation Safety](#) website provides resources and funding information to improve transportation safety on Tribal lands. These resources are provided by "participating Tribes, Federal and State partners and Tribal Technical Assistance Centers."

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